

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

2 1. A method for accessing variables from an operating system,
3 comprising:
4 executing a command from an application program to store at least one
5 variable maintained by the operating system in a data object accessible to the
6 application program, wherein the application program is executing on the operating
7 system;
8 executing an operating system command in response to the command from the
9 application program to retrieve the requested at least one variable; and
10 storing the retrieved at least one variable in the data object.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 receiving a request from the application program for at least one variable
3 maintained by the operating system; and
4 determining whether the requested variable is in the data object, wherein the
5 command from the application program is processed to retrieve and store the at least
6 one variable in the data object if the requested at least one variable is not in the data
7 object.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the application program is a first
2 application program, further comprising:
3 receiving a request from a second application program for at least one variable
4 maintained by the operating system; and
5 returning the requested at least one variable from the data object populated as
6 a result of the command executed by the first application program.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the requested at least one variable
2 retrieved as a result of execution of the command from the application program is a
3 set of environment variables.

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1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the variable name and value for each
2 variable are maintained on at least one line, further comprising:
3 processing each line in the data stream on a line-by-line;

4 determining whether each line includes the equal sign, wherein, for each line
5 including the equal sign, the variable name is set to the string preceding the equal sign
6 and the variable value is set to the string following the equal sign; and
7 appending the content of each line not including the equal sign to the variable
8 value.

1 10. A computer system for accessing variables from an operating system,
2 comprising:

3 a computer;

4 a memory storing at least one variable;

5 program logic executed by the computer, comprising:

6 (i) means for executing a command from an application program to
7 store at least one variable maintained by the operating system in a data object
8 in the memory accessible to the application program, wherein the application
9 program is executing on the operating system;

10 (ii) means for executing an operating system command in response to
11 the command from the application program to retrieve the requested at least
12 one variable; and

13 (iii) means for storing the retrieved at least one variable in the data
14 object.

1 11. The computer system of claim 10, wherein the program logic further
2 comprises:

3 means for receiving a request from the application program for at least one
4 variable maintained by the operating system; and

5 means for determining whether the requested variable is in the data object,
6 wherein the command from the application program is processed to retrieve and store
7 the at least one variable in the data object if the requested at least one variable is not
8 in the data object.

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1 16. The system of claim 10, wherein the command from the application
2 program is for storing multiple variables, and the program logic for retrieving the
3 requested variables comprises means for generating a data stream including the
4 variables, and where the program logic further comprises:

5 means for reading the retrieved variables from the data stream into a buffer;
6 and
7 means for processing each line in the buffer to determine each variable name
8 and value, wherein each determined variable name and value is stored in the data
9 object.

1 17. The system of claim 16, wherein the program logic for determining
2 each variable name and value comprises:

3 means for determining a location of an equal sign;
4 means for setting the variable name to the string preceding the equal sign; and
5 means for setting the variable value to the string following the equal sign.

1 18. The system of claim 17, wherein the variable name and value for each
2 variable are maintained on at least one line, and wherein the program logic further
3 comprises:

4 means for processing each line in the data stream on a line-by-line;
5 means for determining whether each line includes the equal sign, wherein, for
6 each line including the equal sign, the variable name is set to the string preceding the
7 equal sign and the variable value is set to the string following the equal sign; and
8 means for appending the content of each line not including the equal sign to
9 the variable value.

1 19. An article of manufacture for use in accessing variables from an
2 operating system, the article of manufacture comprising computer useable media
3 accessible to a computer, wherein the computer usable media includes at least one
4 computer program that is capable of causing the computer to perform:
5 executing a command from an application program to store at least one
6 variable maintained by the operating system in a data object accessible to the

7 application program, wherein the application program is executing on the operating
8 system;
9 executing an operating system command in response to the command from the
10 application program to retrieve the requested at least one variable; and
11 storing the retrieved at least one variable in the data object.

1 20. The article of manufacture of claim 19, further comprising:
2 receiving a request from the application program for at least one variable
3 maintained by the operating system; and
4 determining whether the requested variable is in the data object, wherein the
5 command from the application program is processed to retrieve and store the at least
6 one variable in the data object if the requested at least one variable is not in the data
7 object.

1 21. The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein the application
2 program is a first application program, further comprising:
3 receiving a request from a second application program for at least one variable
4 maintained by the operating system; and
5 returning the requested at least one variable from the data object populated as
6 a result of the command executed by the first application program.

1 22. The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein the requested at least
2 one variable retrieved as a result of execution of the command from the application
3 program is a set of environment variables.

1 23. The article of manufacture of claim 19, further comprising:
2 determining a type of the operating system; and
3 selecting the operating system command from a set of native operating system
4 commands for different types of operating systems, wherein the selected operating

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5 system command is capable of being executed on the operating system to retrieve the
6 requested at least one variable, and wherein the application program is capable of
7 executing on each of the different types of operating systems.

1 24. The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein the command from the
2 application program and the operating system command are executed in a first process
3 and the application program is executed in a second process.

1 25. The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein the command from the
2 application program is for storing multiple variables, and wherein retrieving the
3 requested variables comprises generating a data stream including the variables, and
4 further comprising:
5 reading the retrieved variables from the data stream into a buffer; and
6 processing each line in the buffer to determine each variable name and value,
7 wherein each determined variable name and value is stored in the data object.

1 26. The article of manufacture of claim 25, wherein determining each
2 variable name and value comprises:
3 determining a location of an equal sign;
4 setting the variable name to the string preceding the equal sign; and
5 setting the variable value to the string following the equal sign.

1 27. The article of manufacture of claim 26, wherein the variable name and
2 value for each variable are maintained on at least one line, further comprising:
3 processing each line in the data stream on a line-by-line;
4 determining whether each line includes the equal sign, wherein, for each line
5 including the equal sign, the variable name is set to the string preceding the equal sign
6 and the variable value is set to the string following the equal sign; and
7 appending the content of each line not including the equal sign to the variable
8 value.

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